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Received & Inspected

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FCC Mail Room

RE: Public Comment for WC Docket Number 12-375

Dear Secretary Dortch:

I am writing you in regards to prison and jail phone rates.

First, your recent cap on prison phone rates has helped myself and others stay in better contact with our families. Many of us are serving decades in prison and without constant contact with family one loses touch with the other reality of the real world. I think the current caps are still too excessive and should be lowered further. One must remember that society pays a high cost when ex-offenders are thrust back into society after decades in prison with little or no family bonding and no funds to get started with because excessive phone rates drained them. We were sent to prison as punishment and not to be extorted which is what big business has been doing the past few decades.

Second, intrastate phone calls need to be capped as soon as possible. Recently I was called to court from federal prison as a witness in a lawsuit. I was held in Marion County jail in Illinois. I was put into a 20 man pod with one phone. The problem arose when I tried to make any call. First, one had to submit a phone list to the local phone company, then pre-pay an inflated price to even make a call. One could not even call collect from the jail to home. This was how Wayne County Jail in Detroit was run also. Until someone prepaid \$30.00 or so on an account you could not make any calls.

Inmates across the country are basically being extorted by monopolistic companies who prey on the poor and disadvantaged.

Prices should be lower for both intrastate and interstate calls and bans put on pre-paid services. In addition a rule should be enacted prohibiting bans on collect calls unless a list is preapproved. Remember people from all walks of life are sometimes thrust into a county jail with no access to medications

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or other services. Many times desperate people get extorted because of this as others will make calls for them or otherwise take advantage of them. No American should ever be cut off from society or home due to excessive phone prices or regulations by phone companies that requires pre-approved numbers that take a week or so to approve.

Thank-you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pat Mel". The signature is fluid and written in dark ink.